



Branched coconut palm at Bachok, Kelantan.

From a photograph sent by Mr. F. G. Crosste.

THE GARDENS' BULLETIN, STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

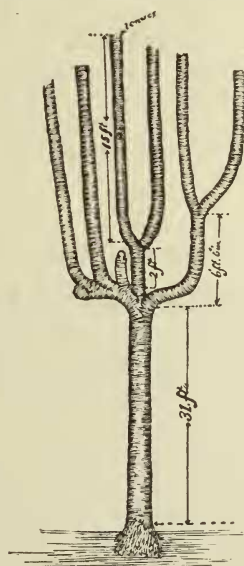
Vol. III

Issued August 1923

Nos. 1-3.

THE FERTILITY OF BRANCHED COCONUT PALMS.

In a paper in the *Annals of Botany*, xxi, 1907, p. 420, Mr. H. N. Ridley gave an account of an abnormally branched coconut palm standing upon Perseverance Estate in Singapore island. This tree which is figured upon his plate xxxvi, he was told had never fruited: and the idea that branched coconut-palms are sterile, seems to be general: but it is not absolutely true. Reports of fertile branched coconut palms in New Guinea and in the West Indies have been noticed, and the matter is discussed in Hunger's *Cocos nucifera* (2nd Edition, Amsterdam, 1920) pp. 218-226.



At Geylang on land adjoining the Perseverance Estate there stands at the present time a forked coconut palm. It is sterile now, but is said to have borne fruit.

In Penang island upon a coconut plantation near Tanjong Bunga stands a palm branched as in the annexed drawing by Mr. Mohamed Haniff. It has seven branches and the stumps of two additional ones. Mr. Mohamed Haniff has ascertained that all the fully crowned branches are fertile, and the palm is fruiting now. The tree is said by an old Malay on the Estate to be 45 to 50 years in age.

Mr. Frank G. Crosslé has supplied the following information and the photograph reproduced here of a branched coconut to which the following relates "The tree is upon the outskirts of the village of Bachok, Kelantan. It is said that once it had fourteen branches, and that five have died off: the stumps of two of these can still be seen. The height is approximately 25 feet high from the ground to the place where it divides. It has now started to bear fruit, three nuts on three different branches, which have matured."

Mr. Crosslé continues that he has heard of several branched coconut-palms before, and knows one at Kretay in Trengganu, but that he has never heard of one bearing fruit.

Further information upon branched trees occurring elsewhere would be valued.

I. H. BURKILL.

BRANCHING IN ARENGA PINNATA.

A young palm of *Arenga pinnata* Merr. (*A. saccharifera* Labill.) planted out as a replacement in the Arenga Avenue of the Botanic Gardens suffered in 1920 injury to its terminal bud. This bud was replaced by an axillary bud from one of the uppermost axils, and that bud is now commencing to produce a trunk. The possibility of this palm branching has not been recorded before.

I. H. BURKILL.

AN EXPERIMENT WITH LETTUCES.

In the end of 1921 lettuce-seed of a number of different races was ordered from England and from France, with the object of ascertaining the best races for local cultivation. The seed duly arrived,—twelve races from Messrs. Sutton and Sons, Reading, England, and 15 races from the firm of Vilmorin-Andrieux and Co., Paris. Of the english races eight were cabbage lettuces and four cos lettuces; and of the french races twelve were cabbage lettuces and three cos. The seeds were sown on November 21st, in a mixture of sand and burned earth, and germination was very satisfactory in forty-eight hours. When the seedlings were 2—3 inches high,—that was in 7—9 days,—they were transplanted into beds, care being taken to do it only when the sun was off the beds.